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REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 15th July 1899.

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LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	Remarks.
	Bengali.	**Calcutta.**			
	Weekly.				
1	"Bangabhumi"	Calcutta	.....	8th July, 1899.	
2	"Bangavasi"	Ditto	25,000	6th ditto.	
3	"Basumati"	Ditto	15,000	7th ditto.	
4	"Hitavadi"	Ditto	About 6,000		
5	"Mihir-o-Sudhakar" ...	Ditto	2,500	10th ditto.	
6	"Prativasi"	Ditto	3,600		
7	"Samay"	Ditto	3,000		
8	"Sanjivani"	Ditto	3,000	6th ditto.	
9	"Som Prakash" ...	Ditto	1,000	3rd ditto.	
	Daily.				
1	"Dainik Chandrika" ...	Calcutta	.....	10th, 11th, and 13th July, 1899.	
2	"Samvad Prabhakar" ...	Ditto	2,000		
3	"Samvad Purnachandrodaya"	Ditto	300	7th, 8th, and 10th to 15th July, 1899.	
	Hindi.				
	Weekly.				
1	"Bharat Mitra" ...	Calcutta	2,000	10th July, 1899.	
2	"Hindi Bangavasi" ...	Ditto	1,000	10th ditto.	
	Persian.				
	Weekly.				
1	"Hablul Mateen" ...	Calcutta	800	10th ditto.	
2	"Mefta-hur-zafar" ...	Ditto	.....		
	Urdu.				
	Weekly.				
1	"Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide."	Calcutta	300	6th July, 1899.	
2	"General and Gauhariasfi"	Ditto	330	8th ditto.	
	Bengali.	**Burdwan Division.**			
	Fortnightly.				
1	"Ulubaria Darpan" ...	Ulubaria ...	.....		
	Weekly.				
1	"Bangabandhu" ...	Chandernagore ...	.....	6th July, 1899.	
2	"Bankura Darpan" ...	Bankura ...	600	8th ditto.	
3	"Burdwan Sanjivani" ...	Burdwan ...	235	4th ditto.	
4	"Chinsura Vartavaha" ...	Chinsura ...	510	9th ditto.	
5	"Education Gazette" ...	Hooghly ...	1,350	7th ditto.	
6	"Medini Bandhav" ...	Midnapore ...	.....	10th ditto.	
7	"Pallivasi" ...	Kalna ...	600	5th ditto.	
	Bengali.	**Presidency Division.**			
	Weekly.				
1	"Murshidabad Hitaishi" ...	Berhampore, Murshidabad.	500	5th and 12th July, 1899.	
2	"Pratikar" ...	Ditto ...	603	7th ditto.	

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS—*concluded.*

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	Remarks.
	URIYA. *Weekly.*	ORISSA DIVISION.			
1	"Sambalpur Hitaishini" ...	Bamra, in the Central Provinces.	500	5th April, 1899.	
2	"Samvad Vahika" ...	Balasore ...	150		
3	"Uriya and Navasamvad" ...	Ditto	376	9th ditto.	
4	"Utkal Dipika" ...	Cuttack	400	8th ditto.	
	HINDI. *Monthly.*	PATNA DIVISION.			
1	"Bihar Bandhu" ...	Bankipore ...	About 600		
	URDU. *Weekly.*				
1	"Al Punch"	Bankipore ...	500	7th July, 1899.	
2	"Gaya Punch" ...	Gaya	300	.....	The publication of this paper has been temporarily discontinued.
	BENGALI. *Weekly.*	CHOTA NAGPUR DIVISION.			
1	"Manbhum"	Purulia		6th, 13th, 20th, 27th June and 4th and 11th July, 1899.	
	BENGALI. *Weekly.*	RAJSHAHI DIVISION.			
1	"Hindu Ranjika" ...	Boalia, Rajshahi ...	300	5th and 12th July, 1899.	
2	"Kangal" ...	Cooch Behar ...	300	12th July, 1899.	
	HINDI. *Monthly.*				
1	"Darjeeling Mission ke Masik Samachar Patrika."	Darjeeling ...	.....		
	BENGALI. *Fortnightly.*	DACCA DIVISION.			
1	"Faridpur Hitaishini" ...	Faridpur ...	750		
2	"Kasipur Nivasi" ...	Kasipur, Barisal ...	300		
3	"Sikshak Suhrid" ...	Dacca	.....		
	Weekly.				
1	"Barisal Hitaishi" ...	Barisal	400		
2	"Charu Mihir" ...	Mymensingh ...	1,011	4th July, 1899.	
3	"Dacca Prakash" ...	Dacca	2,400	9th ditto.	
4	"Sanjay"	Faridpur	.....		
5	"Saraswat Patra" ...	Dacca	500	8th ditto.	
	ENGLISH AND BENGALI. *Weekly.*				
1	"Dacca Gazette"	Dacca	500	10th ditto.	
	BENGALI. *Weekly.*	CHITTAGONG DIVISION.			
1	"Sansodhini"	Chittagong ...	120		
2	"Tripura Hitaishi" ...	Comilla ...	550	10th ditto.	
	BENGALI. *Fortnightly.*	ASSAM.			
1	"Paridarsak"	Sylhet	.....		
2	"Silchar"	Silchar, Cachar ...	375		

II.—Home administration.

(a)—*Police.*

The *Charu Mihir* of the 4th July writes:— CHARU MIHIR, July 4th, 1899.

A police investigation in the Mymensingh district.

For some time past, Manikjan, daughter of Pagari Shaikh, a resident of Dariknista, within the jurisdiction of the Kotwali police-station in the Mymensingh district, had been living with her father. On a Saturday, towards the end of the month of Jyaistha last, Umedali, Chhamir and some other *badmashes* of the village forcibly carried her away, and she was found after three days in the house of Umedali.

On the Thursday following, Pagari Shaikh started for Mymensingh with his daughter in order to lodge a complaint. Hearing of this, the *badmashes* again carried her off from near the thana and the cutcherry and in the presence of Ramdayal Chaukidar and Rana Sardar. After considerable search, Umedali and Chhamir were arrested the same day in the house of Chheicha Shaikh in Dariknista, but the other accused persons absconded. Babu Asutosh Datta, Deputy Magistrate, has sentenced each of the accused to two years' rigorous imprisonment.

The police arrived at Dariknista on the 8th June to investigate the case. But they did not go before 11th June to the house of Chheicha Shaikh, where two of the accused were arrested. Manikjan says that when she was dragged away by the *badmashes* the second time, she sustained injuries on her body, which she showed to the Court; but the fact of her sustaining these injuries was not recorded in the police diary. We learn that the remissness of the police in making this investigation has called forth from the Deputy Magistrate an indirect reflection on the police. We hope Mr. Roe will look into the diary which was kept by the police officers who investigated this case and into other papers relating thereto, and enquire why the investigation which was made in such a serious case was of so lax a nature.

2. A correspondent of the same paper says:— CHARU MIHIR.

The Kendua police in the Mymensingh district.

Lakhjan Bibi, a resident of Gudania, within the jurisdiction of the Kendua thana, in the Mymensingh district, made a complaint under section 376 before the Sub-Inspector of the thana. But as the Sub-Inspector held a summary investigation without giving previous notice, a complaint was made before the Deputy Magistrate of Netrakona. The accused has been punished.

No investigation has yet been held into the cause of the death of Nura Shaikh, a Chaukidar, who is said to have been killed at Bailjuragram near the Kendua thana.

Amar Chandra De, a resident of Sarehala, complained to the Deputy Magistrate of Netrakona that one Momin Khan and some others had on a certain night forcibly carried away his wife, Nityamayi, aged 14, and violated her chastity, and were still secreting her. The Deputy Magistrate granted a search warrant for the production of Nityamayi in Court. The warrant was issued three months ago, but no trace of Nityamayi has yet been obtained.

3. The *Hitavadi* of the 7th July has the following:— HITAVADI, July 7th, 1899.

Badmashi in Mymensingh and other places.

Badmashi seems to be spreading like an epidemic. Our Jalpaiguri correspondent writes that a gang of 10 or 12 *badmashes*, including Resam Nasya and Diyanat, forcibly carried away Nakiran Nechha, aged 14 or 15, the unmarried daughter of Ijar Nasya of Ghumti, a village within the Boda thana of the Jalpaiguri district. The *badmashes* made a hole at the back of Ijar's house, gagged the girl and carried her to an adjoining bamboo grove, where they ravished her. They kept her concealed for two or three days and committed a brutal outrage on her. Ijar Nasya reported the matter to the police, and Resam Nasya and Diyanat have been arrested and hauled up. The outraged girl is still bleeding.

Badmashi in Mymensingh shows no signs of abatement, notwithstanding the efforts of the authorities and the local zamindars to put it down. The following cases of *badmashi* have been reported to us this week:—

(1) Several *badmashes* abducted the wife of one Ramgopal Teor of Char Lakshmidiya, near the Balipara railway station. His wife has now been returned to him, and Ramgopal, who is a poor man and fears the *badmashes*, has lodged no complaint against them.

(2) Sadar Shaikh and others have been prosecuted for abducting Manijan Bibi, wife of Hali Sheikh of Kokil, a village within the jurisdiction of the Muktagachha station. The accused have been committed to the Sessions.

(3) Sheikh Najir and others have been charged with abducting Amrita Majhini of char Madhupur within the jurisdiction of the Nandail thana. An enquiry into this case is proceeding.

(4) On the 2nd April last, the wife of Kudrut, brother of Hurmat, implicated in the outrage on Khidir Jan Bibi, of Dattagram, within the jurisdiction of the Iswarganj police-station, went to fetch water, when one Machu Sheikh of Baraibarhi, who was grazing cows, tried to carry her to a bamboo grove and ravish her. The poor girl raised an alarm, which drew a crowd. Machu Sheikh then began to cry for mercy. Machu Sheikh was prosecuted and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 25.

(5) The case of outrage on Khidir Jan daughter of Isab Sheikh, aged 14 or 15, of Dattagram, thana Iswarganj, has been decided. Khidir Jan said in her deposition that Hasmat, Alam, Sukur and Hurmat carried her to the house of another man and there ravished her. Thence she was taken to the house of Samir who joined the gang in ravishing her again. Next day Jadab, Sadhu and Sader Ali committed a brutul outrage on her. Three days after she was taken to Abdul's house, where he too ravished her. At last she one day managed to escape and go to the police. The accused have been convicted under sections 498 and 457 and sentenced to two years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 20 each.

(6) On the 28th May last, one Durga Charan, accompanied by Samraj Sheikh and four others, trespassed at night into the house of one Bama, a young woman of Sakhua, a village within the jurisdiction of the Iswarganj thana. The girl and her relatives raised an alarm, which drew a crowd. The *badmashes* took to flight. Ten days after, however, the *badmashes* again returned with new recruits into their gang and abducted the girl in broad daylight. Bama has not yet been traced.

4. The same paper writes as follows:—

HITAVADI, July 7th, 1899.

The case of Benkatram of the Madras Presidency.

Mr. Benkatram was a police Sub-Inspector in the Madras Presidency. He entered the Salt Department after passing the Entrance Examination of the Madras University, and was soon promoted to a Police Sub-Inspectorship for his ability and diligence. In 1896 he was entrusted with a police enquiry in Gajapati village. He was then instructed by the Police Superintendent to give evidence in the case. In his deposition, however, there was a discrepancy, and the Sessions Court ordered his prosecution for perjury. He called for the assistance of the Police authorities, but the District Superintendent, who had become angry with him for the discrepancy in his deposition, refused to help him in any way. He was tried and acquitted; but his acquittal did not satisfy the Superintendent, who advised him to retire. Benkatram hesitated, and the Superintendent one day sent him to the Civil Surgeon with a letter and a batch of papers. The Civil Surgeon asked him a few questions and dismissed him. Benkatram did not know anything about the papers sent to the Civil Surgeon. Benkatram has been dismissed on the strength of the Civil Surgeon's certificate that he is physically unfit for Government service. Three years ago, the same Civil Surgeon, however, declared Benkatram fit for Government service. Benkatram's age is now only 31 years, and he knows nothing about any illness. He had appealed to the Madras Government, but in vain. Benkatram is prepared to prove that he is quite fit for service. It will reflect great discredit on the Government if Benkatram is dismissed unjustly and simply for the gratification of the whim of a high official. We beg to draw Lord Curzon's attention to this matter. It is rumoured in Simla that His Excellency has recently reinstated in his post an old Government servant, who

had been dismissed by a Secretary on the ground of incompetency. This rumour may or may not be true. But Lord Curzon is determined to govern well, and it will not be too much to expect justice from him.

5. The *Bangavasi* of the 8th July reports a case of daring dacoity, which was committed on the 27th June in the house of one Madan Sarkar, a rich Musalman of Sanandakhila, a village within the jurisdiction of the Phulpur thana in the Mymensingh district. The dacoits, who numbered about 40 or 50 men, were all armed. They first entered Madan's bed-room and demanded the key of his ironsafe. On his refusal to give up the key, the dacoits cut off his head. A girl of 12 who was in the same room, raised an alarm and was put to death. Two of the deceased's nephews were also beaten to death on their coming out to resist the dacoits. A Maulvi, who was a guest in the house for the night, concealed himself behind a tree, gun in hand. The neighbours mustered strong and came to the rescue, when the dacoits took to flight. The Maulvi fired at and wounded one of the dacoits. He was arrested and handed over to the police.

Daring dacoity in a village in the Mymensingh district.

BANGAVASI, July 8th, 1899.

The editor thus comments on the above:—

What a dreadful occurrence! We refrain from giving out the name and address of our correspondent lest the dacoits do him any injury.

BANGAVASI.

6. The same paper has the following with reference to the case against the Assistant Station Master of Hooghly:—

The outrage case in the Hooghly railway station.

If the accused, Bhutnath Mukharji, be innocent, let him be acquitted—let him come out of the trial like the full moon out of the clouds. But the scoundrel who went so far as to take the cloth off the breast of a Hindu lady with a criminal intention—let him, if this case is true, be adequately punished. We say this in the name of our country, in the name of our society, in the name of our religion.

Who can bear this—this insult to a lady—this uncovering of the breast of a sleeping woman, this outrage on her modesty with a criminal intention? He who has a wife, a sister, a mother, or a daughter will go almost mad if he hears of this painful, this heartrending incident. The Assistant Station Master has to perform responsible duties. Hundreds of ladies pass through the station every day. If any outrage is committed on one of these ladies, and if the perpetrator of that outrage is not detected, the consequences will be most unfortunate. If Bhutnath be innocent, let him be acquitted. But let the offender, whoever he be, be arrested and adequately punished.

(*b*)—*Working of the Courts.*

7. The *Charu Mihir* of the 4th July writes:—

Withdrawal of the notice issued against the *Charu Mihir*.

We said in our issue of the 20th June last that when our Manager saw Mr. Roe, the Magistrate did not hesitate to hold out to him the threat of imprisonment (Report on Native Papers for 1st July, paragraph 9). Mr. Roe contradicted this statement when withdrawing the notice issued against us. He said that he had never held out the threat of imprisonment, but had only informed the Manager that proceedings might be taken against the paper if it published false reports.

CHARU MIHIR, July 4th, 1899.

Mr. Roe expressed sorrow for having issued the notice, and this acknowledgment of error only shows how very highminded he is. On our part, we must confess that we were pained to write against Mr. Roe. It is not a pleasant task to write against the rulers of the country. But there was no help. We were astonished to see the boldness of the Mymensingh *badmashes*, and we said that they could not be put down if the Magistrate did not keep a sharp eye on them. We published reports of the outrage cases simply with the object of strengthening the hands of Mr. Roe, and we hope he will not, in future, take our motive differently.

8. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* of the 4th July is glad that Mr. Roe, Magistrate of Mymensingh, has thought fit to cancel the order he issued against the *Charu Mihir*. He also received the proprietor of the paper with great courtesy in Court, encouraged him to bring to light cases of outrage upon

Mr. Roe's treatment of the *Charu Mihir*.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI, July 4th, 1899.

women, and asked him to help the police in their investigations by publishing the names and addresses of the witnesses in such cases. This has been very considerate conduct towards the *Charu Mihir* on the part of Mr. Roe. Such conduct on the part of a Magistrate is seldom seen. In most cases, high officials, doing something wrong, persist, through sheer *zid*, in the improper course they have taken. That Mr. Roe has acted differently and admitted his error shows that he will in time become a most worthy and dutiful administrator and win popularity among the people.

MURSHIDABAD HITAISHI, July 5th, 1899.

Supply of stamps to stamp vendors in Murshidabad.

9. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* of the 5th July draws attention to the inconvenience which the stamp vendors in Murshidabad suffer from the refusal of the Treasury Officers to issue stamps from the treasuries every day. Appeals to the higher authorities have failed to mend matters.

SANJIVANI, July 6th, 1899.

Mr. Foster, Subdivisional Officer of Barh.

10. The *Sanjivani* of the 6th July contains the following:—

On the 27th June last, one Radharam, chaprasi, informed Mr. Foster, Subdivisional Officer of Barh, in the Patna district, that a mukhtar named Abdul Rahman, his muharrir, Vilayet Hosain, and one Hamid Hosain, a copyist in the Criminal Court, had abstracted from the Court one Tarak Hosain's petition and some other papers relating thereto. Mr. Foster immediately went to the mukhtar's room and arrested Abdul Rahman and Vilayet Hosain. Hamid Hosain fled from the verandah of the Court-house and destroyed by fire some Court documents. He, too, was arrested. Mr. Foster prosecuted and tried the three men himself on that very day, and sentenced Abdul Rahman to three months' rigorous imprisonment, Vilayet Hosain to three months' simple imprisonment and Hamid Hosain to a whipping of fifteen stripes. As the Medical Officer of Barh was not at the station that day, Mr. Foster himself certified that the prisoner was in a fit state of health to bear the whipping. He thus took upon himself the three-fold responsibility of prosecutor, trying Magistrate and Medical Officer, and had Hamid Hosain whipped on the back in his presence till he bled. The remaining two prisoners also were immediately sent to jail. The Magistrate's hurry, however, left him no time to write out his judgment properly. In a calmer moment, at home, he realised that his action had not been in accordance with form. He, therefore, wrote out a separate judgment the next day, setting forth the grounds of the punishments inflicted, and stating that he could not for want of time write out judgment in proper form on the previous day. But if Mr. Foster was so hard-pressed for time, what harm could there be in not trying the case that day? What necessity was there for him to unite in himself the three functions of Magistrate, prosecutor and doctor? Apparently, there would have been no harm in transferring the case to the file of a Deputy Magistrate, nor any harm in waiting for the Medical Officer's return to the station.

All the three accused have appealed to the District Judge. But if they are found innocent, Hamid Hosain's wrong cannot be redressed. Indeed, it is Magistrates like Mr. Foster who have made the Criminal Courts of this country a terror to the people.

SANJIVANI,

The case of whipping in Rampur Hât.

11. A respectable man writes from Nalhati in the same paper:—

As an incorrect and exaggerated account of the case of Biru Dom, in which the accused was sentenced to whipping, has appeared with somebody's remarks in a certain paper, I give below a true report of the occurrence.

Biru Dom, a lad of 15 or 16, is a resident of Kadasingh, a village about five miles distant from the Nalhati thana. One day, while playing with a girl of eight or nine, he had a quarrel with her, and kicked her in such a manner that her leg was fractured. He was tried for this offence by Mr. Jarbo, the Subdivisional Officer of Rampur Hât, and sentenced, under section 325 of the Indian Penal Code, to a whipping of 30 stripes. On the recommendation of the Medical Officer, however, the sentence was reduced by five stripes, and the lad was let off with a whipping of 25 stripes. As I live at a distance, I cannot say whether Mr. Jarbo is fond of the punishment of whipping, nor can I say in what manner Biru Dom's sentence was carried out. I cannot also say if an offence under section 325 can or cannot be punished with whipping. All I am

able to say is that it was better to let off such a young boy with whipping than to send him to jail for a long term, and that it would have been still better for the Subdivisional Officer to have let him off with a smaller number of stripes than were actually inflicted. Two or three days after Biru suffered his punishment, there was a rumour that he had died on reaching home. Some said that he was lying in a dying condition. But on enquiry it was found that there was no foundation for these rumours, and that on the very day of his punishment Biru had waded eight miles through mud and water. He was also made by the Sub-Inspector of the local thana, on the rumour of his death, to come to the thana on the 28th June last, walking eight miles on foot. I saw him there, but did not find any sign of ill-health about him.

12. The *Hitavadi* of the 7th July has the following:— HITAVADI, July 7th, 1899.

The Subdivisional Officer of Rampur Hât.

What we wrote about Mr. Jarbo's highhandedness in our last issue (Report on Native Papers for 8th July, 1899, paragraph 14) has, so to say, kindled a fire in Rampur Hât. A correspondent writes:—

"The *Hitavadi's* writings have kindled a fire in this place. The police have employed spies to ascertain what is being said about the matter. At the instance of Mr. Jarbo, the Sub-Deputy Collector is making a public enquiry as to who wrote about the matter in the *Hitavadi*. Anarchy prevails in Rampur Hât. The police is taking down the deposition of anyone it suspects. It has already taken down the deposition of the following gentlemen:—

1. Babu Rajkumar Banerji, 2nd Pandit, Rampur Hât School.
2. „ Nagendranath Ray, Head Master.
3. „ Hemanta Kumar Chatterji, B.L., Second Master.

The police wanted these gentlemen to say who supplied the *Hitavadi* with information regarding the whipping of Biru Dom. We fail to understand why the police suspected these men. It should be decided whether the police can take down the deposition of anyone and everyone it suspects. Otherwise it will be impossible for quiet and inoffensive people to live in Rampur Hât. If anybody has written anything in the *Hitavadi* why should the police make any enquiry about it? The man who is written against may prosecute the *Hitavadi*."

Another correspondent writes as follows:—

"At the instance of Mr. Jarbo, the Sub-Deputy Collector, Mr. Jarbo's immediate subordinate, is publicly enquiring who wrote the letter in question in the *Hitavadi*. This Sub-Deputy may lose his post if he does not keep Mr. Jarbo in humour, and that is most probably the reason why he is trying to make some gentlemen of the locality figure as accused persons. He wanted the following gentlemen to depose on oath:—

1. Babu Nagendranath Banerji, Mukhtar.
2. „ Hari Charan Banerji, ditto.
3. „ Mihir Chandra Singh, ditto.
4. „ Sarada Prasad Banerji, ditto.
5. „ Rajkumar Banerji, Pandit.

On the 1st July last, the depositions of most of the above gentlemen were taken down. To-morrow the depositions of many other gentlemen will be taken down. No complaint has been lodged, and yet the Sub-Deputy Collector is summoning anyone and everyone to his Court, through his peon, and is taking down their depositions in open Court. By what law is his conduct justified"?

What shall we say? What shall we hear? One is loath to believe that such things are taking place under British rule. But these things are taking place in open Court. Let the Government enquire and it will know.

Our correspondent writes further as follows:—

"The writings in the *Hitavadi* have made Mr. Jarbo assume a threatening attitude. He called Babu Durga Charan Das, a mukhtar, to Court, and asked him: 'Have you sent Raj Pandit to Nalhati'? Durga Charan Babu replied with a smile—'No.' Upon this Mr. Jarbo said: 'You are now smiling here; but within three months you will have to smile in jail with your friends.' Mr. Jarbo also said publicly: 'There are three persons implicated in this case.

If one of the two of these three confesses his guilt, he may be pardoned and made Queen's evidence. But as for Raj Pandit, he will not be shown this favour even if he confesses his guilt. He shall certainly be sentenced to five years' imprisonment.' As he said this, Mr. Jarbo rapped the table in anger."

Another correspondent writes as follows:—

"When Mr. Jarbo heard that the boy had died he was seized with fear, and at first tried to shift the whole blame on to the shoulders of the doctor. But, afterwards, hearing that the boy had not died, he pleased the boy and his father in various ways. He also called some mukhtars and got it written by them that the boy was alive. The Subdivisional Officer is madly against the *Hitavadi*. Nobody, however, has been questioned on the points which are within his knowledge, and no one who witnessed the whipping has been called." This method of taking evidence, this attempt to threaten people, this fiendish (*paisachik* conduct in executing the sentence of whipping—no one will find the like of it anywhere else in the world.

It is easier to imagine than describe the panic into which Mr. Jarbo's conduct has thrown the Rampur Hát public. We beg to draw the attention of the higher authorities to this state of things. If such things happen under British rule and during Lord Curzon and Sir John Woodburn's administration, where else in the world can we expec' to see peace? We have sent agents to Rampur Hát to make enquiries. Let the authorities cause a local enquiry to be made, and good is sure to come out of it. For, in that case, the Government will be able to know the true state of things. And if the authorities can once know the true state of things, they will, we doubt not, soon take steps to remove the grievance.

(*d*)—*Education.*

PRATIVASI, July 10th, 1819.

The new scheme of Vernacular Education.

13. The *Prativasi* of the 10th July has the following on the report of the Committee appointed to revise the subjects and text-books used in vernacular education in Bengal:—

There were on the Committee some educated native gentlemen connected with education, but we find no evidence of their educational experience in the report. The only important point in the Committee's report is a lengthy discussion of the object and usefulness of the Kindergarten system of training. We may be at one with the Committee in our appreciation of the merits of the Kindergarten system; but we are sorry not to find in the report any logical and reasoned discussion of the following important points:—How far will the class of boys, for whom the new system is intended, benefit by it; whether the class of teachers, who impart education to the boys of the vernacular schools, will be able to do justice to the system; and whether the introduction of the new system of training will or will not be a costly undertaking?

"The development of the educational structure," write the Committee at the very outset of their report, "is very considerably dependent on the nature of its foundations." Nobody can question the wisdom of laying foundations deep and making them solid and strong; but will it not be a wise and prudent course to lay foundations with a due regard to the nature of the superstructure to be raised thereon? If the pathsala and middle education have no connection with high education, it will be as useless to place vernacular education on deep and solid foundations, as it is to cast pearls before swine. In this country, rich and middle class people invariably send their boys to school after giving them a rudimentary education at home. There is, now a days, an Entrance school in every town, and Entrance schools have been opened in many villages. Almost everyone is desirous of giving his boys an English education, and it is such boys who afterwards receive high education. We fail to understand what good the Kindergarten system will do to boys who will not complete and perfect their education in this way. In the opinion of Froebel, the object of his system is "self-completion and not getting on in the world." Froebel perceived that all natural objects are subject to the same laws of origin, growth and decay. In conformity with natural laws, he has subjected the human mind to similar laws of development. All this is true. But it is useless to subject those to Froebel's system of education, who are intended to

receive only a little education, which will help them to get on in the world. What is the use of introducing such a complex and comprehensive system of education for those whose object it is to acquire a little knowledge of reading and writing and enter zamindars' service; or to get by heart Subhankari and other rules of account and take to shop-keeping? Under the existing system, pathsala and middle school boys can know a little of arithmetic and accounts; and this little knowledge serves them in good stead in after life. There is no need of educating the boys of the lower classes on such a finished plan as that proposed by the Committee.

The Kindergarten system of training may develop the student's power of observation and create in him a desire to know the nature of things; but the value and importance of this system of education lies in its being an admirable stepping-stone to future and higher education. But it will be more advisable to teach reading, writing and calculation and not drawing, drill and object-lessons, to a boy who is to equip himself within three or four years with all that knowledge which will be useful to him in his sphere of life.

The Government advised the Committee to pay particular attention to the developing of the minds of the boys, to the training of the powers of observation, and to the development of the powers of hand and eye. The object of true education should be the development of the mind. But it is needless, under the existing circumstances, to press the children of our agricultural and labouring classes for intellectual development. Let them acquire a little knowledge of reading and writing, know the rudimentary laws of health, and receive a little training in casting up accounts and measuring lands. This will benefit them in after life. They should not be made to waste their time on object-lessons. What is the use of laying such deep foundations for the education of those who are not to receive a high scientific education? Ten pages on agriculture in a Science Primer are not likely to impart so much knowledge of agriculture to the son of an agriculturist, as will enable him to make his field yield a bumper crop. The technical education, on which depends the improvement of commerce and agriculture, should be based on the solid foundation of high education. Mr. Tata is trying to teach the graduates manufacture and commerce. For a knowledge of the subject pre-supposes an extensive and accurate knowledge of physical sciences, which higher education alone can impart. It is impossible to understand what earthly good will be derived from the new system of education by the son of an agriculturist, who is to end his education after learning only a few rudimentary principles of chemistry and physical science.

The following also occurs in the Committee's report :—

"They (the Committee) wish it, however, to be very dintinctly understood that there is no intention of teaching or attempting to teach such subjects as chemistry, physics, natural history as sciences to the children who attend the vernacular schools, but they wish to point out and make it quite clear that all that can be done is to present in a homely way some of the simpler and more important facts and truths of such sciences."

One fails to clearly understand the meaning which is hidden in the above passage. We are not quite sure of the efficacy of the process, of the 'homely way,' that is, of teaching young boys the rudiments of scientific knowledge; we are not quite confident of the practicability of teaching science in an easy and homely way. We do not know what intellectual improvement is expected by the young learner from a study of Huxley's *Science Primer*. The *Science Primer* contains all the higher principles of science, a lucid explanation of which will require an amount of knowledge both in the teacher and the taught, which is not possessed by the young boys of the lower schools and their teachers.

Professor Huxley thus regretted the absence of the teaching of science in the primary schools:—

"If anyone is concerned in knowing the ordinary laws of mechanics one would think it is the handlabourer, whose daily toil lies among levers, and pulleys, or among the other implements of artisan work. And if anyone is interested in the laws of health, it is the poor workman, whose strength is wasted by ill-prepared food, whose health is sapped by bad ventilation and bad drainage, and half whose children are massacred by disorders which might be prevented."

But we fail to understand how these important subjects can be dealt with in a text-book intended for a boy of eight years in such a way as to make them intelligible and a study of them useful to the young learner. In Professor Huxley's opinion, it is essentially necessary for the children of the labouring classes to know the laws of health, but it is beyond our comprehension how young boys will be able to understand the principles of such intricate subjects as ventilation, drainage and the proper preparation of food. What is the use of introducing such subjects in primary schools? When you will be able to keep the children of the masses under an efficient scientific training in schools and colleges, then and then only should you expect to see the coming of the millenium and the dawning of Utopia, otherwise it will be worse than useless to make a boy of eight learn all these intricate principles of science. If you can give every child of eight years a high education, then you are at liberty to teach him painting and modelling and drawing, to teach him to find out the distinction between a straight and a curve line, between the white and the black colour. For such a training will lay the foundations of knowledge deep. Let him who would build a large four-storeyed house lay his foundations deep, but he who would build only a hut will ill-afford to spend the whole of his time and energy in laying his foundations deep and solid. In our opinion the boys of the labouring and agricultural classes, who generally go to pathsalas and middle schools, should be taught only such subjects as will enable them to earn their livelihood. Let not the children of the poor vainly pursue an imaginary ideal, however alluring. The son of a poor man cannot, within the short time at his disposal, be given such scientific education as will enable him to improve his trade or calling. Let him rather learn to draft a bond, to take stock and to calculate interest. Let him also learn a few rudimentary principles of hygiene, and his education will be complete.

So much for the new scheme of education. As for the agency which is to carry it out, it appears that the Committee is desirous of introducing the scheme before creating the agency. The Committee admit that the gurus who are entrusted with the education of the boys of the primary schools, have never been found to serve any useful purpose. To tell the truth, the evils of the present system of education are mainly due to unfit and inefficient teachers who have no heart in the education of boys. In the text-books for primary and middle schools many principles of science and hygiene are generally introduced, but the boys have never been known to derive any good from their study. No system of education, can be a success without good teachers and necessary instruments for teaching, but we fail to understand how the Committee can provide both without incurring any additional expenditure.

Bhudev Babu's "ক্ষেত্রতত্ত্ব" or Geometry contains many hints for teachers, but no teacher has ever been found to act in accordance therewith. Peary Charan Sarkar's *First Book of Reading* contains a lesson on straight and curve lines, but no teacher has been found to teach the boys to draw straight and curve lines. In literature primers read by boys, there are put at the end of each lesson questions bearing on the nature and constitution of things. But does the teacher pay any attention to these questions?

This is the case with the teachers of English schools. As for the teachers of the vernacular schools, their mode of teaching is even stranger. In teaching a lesson on the tiger, such a teacher will satisfy himself with asking the boy the meaning of বাঘ (colloquial form of ব্যাঘ্র, and he will be pleased if the boy answers "ব্যাঘ্র." Let such a teacher be entrusted with Kindergarten training, and he is sure to teach the boy worse than at present. There is not a single teacher in our vernacular schools whose education is such as to enable him to appreciate or understand the Kindergarten system of education. "As the cultivator," says Froebel, "creates nothing in the trees and plants, so the educationist creates nothing in the children—he merely superintends the development of inborn faculties." The Committee assure us that teachers are being trained in the training schools, who will take up the education of boys under the new system. But we do not believe that a young man educated in a training school will accept a post in a primary school at the present rate of remuneration. Who will undertake the teaching of boys on the Kindergarten system on the condition of getting a reward in proportion to

the number of successful candidates sent up by him? The result will be that the boys will freely play and teachers will freely sleep, for they will say that according to the new system education is a part and parcel of play and they are therefore not responsible for the education of their boys.

In the opinion of the Committee, the primary schools need not require any expensive or even moderately-priced gifts of Froebel and that the form of Kindergarten adopted should be made suitable to the circumstances and local conditions of the pupils. Professor Huxley once said:—

"But I doubt if there is a primary school in England in which hangs a map of the hundred in which the village lies, so that the children may be practically taught by it what a map means."

Huxley regrets the absence of maps in the primary schools in England, but our primary schools lack every necessary article and instrument. In a primary school of Bengal the teacher has to teach the laws of health to boys who are crowded into small huts with heaps of filth around. For pure water, he will have to send a boy to a tank full of moss and duck-weeds. In the opinion of the Committee, not more than four annas a year will be required to procure all the necessary articles and instruments for education on the new plan. But four annas cannot buy even a glass. A boy who will begin his studies in the rainy season will not be taught any lessons on the summer fruits. We fail to appreciate the utility of this cheap system of education. If the Committee had devoted a portion of the energy which they have spent in descanting on the utility of the Kindergarten system, we might have been given an opportunity to test the usefulness and practicability of their plan. In our opinion, none but a teacher highly and liberally educated can usefully teach boys on Kindergarten lines. Without efficient teachers and requisite apparatus the new system will produce more harm than good.

As no one can apprciate the beauty of the verses of Vidyapati and Chandidas without hearing them sung by a gifted singer, so no one can derive any benefit from the Kindergarten system of education if the working out of that system is entrusted to a teacher who has not a particle of Froebel's love of knowledge and zeal in the study of human nature. Considering how little education is honoured for its own sake in this country, the scientific system of education proposed by the Committee will not be a success. It may serve some useful purpose if it is introduced in the high schools.

(*e*)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

Treatment of *bhadralok* in the Berhampore charitable dispensary.

14. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* of the 5th July says that formerly all classes of people not only got medicines and medical advice gratis at the Berhampore charitable dispensary in the Murshidabad district, but could have all surgical operations performed at the dispensary free of charge by either the Civil Surgeon or the Assistant Surgeon. This privilege, however, is said to be withdrawn. A certain native gentleman of Saidabad went the other day to the dispensary to have a broken arm of his daughter examined. But the Assistant Surgeon refused to examine the patient, saying that no *bhadralok* could be treated there free of cost, and if the patient wanted his advice, he should invite the officer to his house and pay him his usual fee. But the dispensary is a public charitable institution and the *bhadralok* has as much right to be treated there as one who is not a *bhadralok*. Besides, every one is not a rich man. There are people whose incomes do not exceed Rs. 25 or Rs. 30 a month, and it is impossible for them to take the Civil or the Assistant Surgeon to their houses and pay them their usual fees.

MURSHIDABAD HITAISHI, July 5th, 1899.

The Midnapore District Board.

15. A member of the Ghatal Local Board, in the Midnapore district, writes in the *Medini Bandhav* of the 10th July that that Board has been able to sanction only the very inadequate sum of Rs. 1,882 for the repair of roads in the subdivision. Village roads in this subdivision have been sadly neglected, the small sum which is sanctioned every year for road repair being wholly spent upon some of the more important roads.

MEDINI BANDHAV, July 10th, 1899.

The District Board of Midnapore has changed its policy of subsidising owners of tanks in the matter of their conditional re-excavation. It now requires

the owners of the tanks, which are to be re-excavated with the Board's money, to make over their ownership to it. But no owner can be expected to agree to this, and if the Board persists in this policy, all attempts at a good water-supply will stop. The Ghatal Local Board has protested against the District Board's proposals, and the other Local Boards in the district should also protest.

PRATIVASI, July 10th, 1899.

Outbreak of malaria in a village in the Khulna district.

16. A correspondent of the *Prativasi* of the 10th July complains of the prevalence of malaria in a virulent form in Senhati in the Khulna district, and of the want of adequate medical help. The poor have to depend entirely on the quinine mixture prescribed by the village quack.

The principal causes of the outbreak are bad drainage and drinking of the water of old filthy ponds full of rotting vegetable matter. The Magistrate some time ago appointed a Committee of the villagers to devise means for improved drainage, but differences of opinion among the members prevented any steps being taken to carry out the Magistrate's proposal.

The villagers ought to be compelled either to re-excavate or to fill up the old tanks.

(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

HITAVADI, July 7th, 1899.

A Railway complaint.

17. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* of the 7th July says that as a breach has been made in the railway line between Kola and Cuttack, passengers for Cuttack are now landed from the steamer at Bhadrak, from which place they have again to go by steamer to Lagna. From Lagna passengers have to walk three miles to Ulapur, where they have again to take steamer. At Lagna passengers, especially female passengers, are put to great difficulty, as no conveyance of any kind is available. The rate of cooly hire is also exorbitant there. The Railway Company will not only do a service to passengers, but will also benefit themselves pecuniarily by working a steamer service from Bhadrak.

HITAVADI.

A Railway complaint.

18. Another correspondent of the same paper says that on the 8th June last some passengers by the 7-up passenger train on the East Indian Railway could not alight at the station for which they had been booked, because they did not hear railway peons cry out the name of their station. A woman in the same train, booked for Mankar, alighted for the same reason at Panagar. The attention of the Agent ought to be directed to the fact of railway peons not loudly calling out the names of stations at night.

HITAVADI.

A Railway complaint.

19. A correspondent of the same paper, writing from Dilpasar, Pabna, complains that on the 22nd June last, when some female members of his family were occupying a female intermediate compartment in a train at the Goalundo station, some policemen and two or three Railway officers forced into the compartment a number of male passengers, without heeding protests or allowing the female occupants time to leave the compartment. A complaint was made to the Station authorities, but they refused to listen to it, nay, even spoke harsh words to the correspondent.

The correspondent can prove his complaint.

BANKURA DARPAN, July 8th, 1899.

A bad road in the Bankura district.

20. A correspondent of the *Bankura Darpan* of the 8th July complains that the road from Santor, *viâ* Kotalpara, to Kalisen, in the Bankura district, is in a deplorable condition. Last year sanction was given to the repair of the breach near the Keklasi bridge over the Geuri khal and some other breaches; but the work has not yet been taken in hand. Meantime, the sufferings of the people who have to use this road have reached their climax.

DACCA PRAKASH, July 9th, 1899.

Railway schemes for East Bengal

21. The *Dacca Prakash* of the 9th July writes as follows:—

It appears from the Railway Administration Report for 1898-99, that Government desire to construct a railway in East Bengal, between Munshiganj in Vikrampur, Dacca district, and Shikarpur, because the population of Vikrampur is very large. It is only because the population of Vikrampur is large that Government prefers this route to shorter routes which would

have cost not more than one-half or one-third of the estimated expenditure on the Vikrampur route. But Government should take note of the fact that the people of Vikrampur are alarmed instead of being delighted to hear that they will get a railway line. They fear that a railway line will seriously interfere with the drainage of Vikrampur. Vikrampur being a low country, is fully washed by flood water in the rainy reason, and is thus enabled to maintain its present remarkably good health. The construction of a railway embankment, with only a few culverts in it, will not allow a free passage of water, and the place will therefore probably become malarious like Manikganj.

We would have urged no objection against this route if there had been no other practicable route. But Government cannot be said to be well-advised in laying a line along the Vikrampur-Shikarpur route when its purpose can be served by laying a line between Goalundo and Dacca, which will cost much less than the proposed line. It is the stratagem of certain powerful officials, who are looking after the interest of the steamer company, which keeps Government in the dark and prevents it from taking a railway line along a route which will bring in the maximum of profit at a minimum of cost. We have repeatedly shown that a railway between Dacca and Goalundo will bring in a net profit of 25 to 30 lakhs annually, and the estimated cost of its construction will be only Rs. 27,72,000. It is hoped Lord Curzon will enquire who are those whose machinations are leading Government astray in this matter.

It is true the survey of a railway line of 42 miles from some point on the left bank of the Brahmaputra, opposite to Goalundo to Dacca town, will be, according to the report, undertaken in the ensuing winter. But the fact that it will be taken in hand only after the surveys for railways between Mymensingh and Netrakona, Sripur and Tangail, and Dacca and Tangail—railways which will be only losing concerns—shows in what light Government regards a Goalundo to Dacca line. Moreover, surveying a route does not mean constructing a railway along it. Take, for instance, the question of the Khulna-Madaripur railway. Though a survey for that line was finished some four or five years ago, the question of a railway between these places has been shelved for the present.

The question of a survey for a Dacca-Tangail railway has probably been taken up in deference to the opinions of the District Magistrate and the Divisional Commissioner, both of whom urged it on the Lieutenant-Governor when His Honour visited Dacca last year. But it is almost certain that, in spite of a survey, the well-wishers of the steamer company will oppose the carrying out of this scheme too.

It appears from the report that Government does not intend the Dacca-Goalundo route to go round Manikganj. Manikganj will, indeed, add three miles to the route, but these three miles will not only prevent the heavy cost of carrying a railway line through a low country, but increase the profit from the line. For, next to Narainganj, Manikganj is the greatest trade centre in Eastern Bengal, and will draw to a railway passing through it the entire jute traffic of the three famous jute marts of Ghiair, Baira and Singair.

A road in the Midnapore district.

22. A correspondent of the *Medini Bandhav* of the 10th July is sorry that the Sadar Local Board, in the Midnapore district, has excluded the Ramnagar-Pathra *kutcha* road from the list which was prepared by it on the 23rd May last. No road, not included in this list, will, in future be looked after by the Local Board. So this road will not be taken care of, and will be allowed to run to demolition. But its importance will be gathered from the following considerations :— MEDINI BANDHAV, July 10th, 1899.

(1) It is the only road which connects the villages Pathra, Binde Pathra, Kulada, Ellachati, Banskalá, Jagul, Dharmapur, Bhutgeria, Palgeria, Panchkhuri, Khalpar, Langullara and Ramnagar with one another, and with Midnapore town.

(2) If the road is not kept in order, the bridge over the canal which flows from the Kansai, will be neglected. And then, the want of it will cause great hardship to people on both sides of the canal.

(3) A large portion of the things which come to the daily *bazar* and weekly *hát*, which is held in Pathra, come from the other side of the canal.

As the road is only about two miles long, and will not require any large sum to keep it in repair, it is hoped the Local Board will include it in its list.

(h)—General.

HITAVADI, July 7th, 1899.

23. The *Hitavadi* of the 7th July writes as follows:—

Caste in the public service.

A Comilla correspondent writes that one Chandra Kantha Nath applied to the Magistrate for permission to appear in the Police Sub-Inspectorship Examination. The Magistrate has rejected his application on the ground that he does not belong to the respectable classes. This strikes us as strange. One never dreamt that a man's hope of entering the public service would, under British rule, be disappointed on the ground of his caste. According to the rules for this examination, a candidate should belong to a respectable class. We, however, know the case of a Hindu belonging to the *Dhoba* class, who drew Rs. 900 a month as his pay. We fail to account for the Magistrate's conduct. He would have done well to remember that a man's caste is a mere accidental qualification.

HITAVADI.

24. A correspondent of the same paper complains that railway passengers from Calcutta, who leave the train at Burdwan, are made to give their names and addresses to police officers at the gate. Formerly, a head constable and a constable used to take down the names and addresses of passengers. This caused great delay and inconvenience, and now that this duty is done by a solitary head-constable, the delay and inconvenience caused are much greater. On the 1st July last, the correspondent started from Howrah by the 7-30 P.M. train, and arrived late at the Burdwan station where he was detained long on account of the plague inspection. Night being far advanced, no conveyance was available, and the correspondent had to go on foot. The number of constables posted at the station for plague inspection should be increased.

Plague inspection at the Burdwan station.

The Editor remarks that, according to the plague rules, police constables should be posted at railway stations to take down the names and addresses of those passengers arriving at those stations whom they suspect as suffering from illness. It is not known if the plague rules require the police to take down the names and addresses of all passengers. If, however, this is the rule, the number of constables at stations for doing this duty should be increased.

DAINIK CHANDRIKA, July 13th, 1899.

25. The *Dainik Chanarika* of the 13th July writes as follows:—

Lord Curzon's proposed Secretariat reform.

We will say a word or two about the Secretariat reform, on which Lord Curzon is bent, and we hope His Lordship will lend an ear to our representation.

If the practice of writing long notes on each case by each Secretary, Under-Secretary, and Assistant Secretary is stopped, what work will be left for so many officials to do? With reduction in work, there ought to be a reduction in the establishments also. And the present Viceroy, just and fearless as he is, is just the man who may be looked up to for such a reduction. None but he has the courage to venture upon such a task. The Indian Exchequer suffers from chronic want. But whenever the question of retrenchment is raised, it is only poor clerks who are removed from office, and the high posts are left untouched. The number of high posts is, in fact, increased from time to time, and is never reduced.

Take, for instance, the office of the Private Secretary to the Viceroy. In this office there are now the Private Secretary, an Assistant Private Secretary, a Registrar, and some nine or ten clerks. Formerly, there was no Assistant Private Secretary in this Department. At the time of the Delhi Durbar, Lord Lytton conferred on the then Registrar, Mr. Panioty, the title of "Honorary Assistant Private Secretary" in recognition of his long and meritorious service. After Lord Lytton's departure from India the word "Honorary" was expunged, and an Assistant Private Secretary came to be permanently employed. One fails to see the necessity of entertaining so many highly paid men in this office.

We hope Lord Curzon will abolish every office for the existence of which he sees no necessity.

III.—Legislative.

26. The *Charu Mihir* of the 4th July has the following :— Charu Mihir, July 4th, 1899.

The Whipping Bill.

No civilised community likes the punishment of whipping. It is a punishment which is inflicted on thieves, &c., and which they alone consider only to be a more convenient form of punishment than imprisonment, because, their only care is to get off as soon as possible from the clutches of the law, in order that they may commit fresh thefts with the least possible delay. But those who fear to commit offences and fear punishment consider whipping to be a very serious form of punishment. Indeed, no class above that of labourers can bear this punishment. It is a punishment which has been observed to bring even low-class men in this country to the point of death.

Once inflicted, there is no remedy for this punishment. And it is inflicted as soon as sentence is passed. But many Magistrates and many Junior Magistrates, in particular, have a special liking for whipping. It will, therefore, be no wonder if the power to sentence offenders in riot cases to whipping is abused.

No one should wonder if, in the mufassal, the proposed measure is, in some cases, used as an instrument for grinding the people. Not unoften innocent persons are implicated in riot cases, and mufassal people have often to engage in riots, against their wish, simply for the sake of protecting their lives and property. In many such cases, no help can be obtained from the police even by asking for it. Those who know the country, also know how difficult it is to recover property, the possession of which has been once lost. If the proposed whipping law is passed, people will have to desist from rioting even if rioting be necessary for the purpose of protecting their lives and property. The punishment of imprisonment, too, is greatly feared by respectable people, but then, it is a punishment against which, if unjustly awarded, there is a remedy in a Court of appeal.

A wide-spread agitation should be set on foot against the Bill. It is a small measure, but, if passed, it will produce very lamentable results. We do not know whether our agitation will bear fruit or not. But if we allow it to be passed without protest, we shall have to smart under it for all time to come. It will not remain a dead-letter like the Consent Act; it will be continually brought into use.

We hope the Whipping Act will not be extended in this way in Lord Curzon's time. Whipping is a barbarous practice, and involves the greatest cruelty. The prestige of the civilised British Government will be impaired if this barbarous practice receives encouragement, instead of being discouraged.

27. The *Sanjivani* of the 6th July writes as follows:— Sanjivani, July 6th, 1899.

The Calcutta Municipal Bill

In our last, we said that the Calcutta Municipal Bill would probably be withdrawn (Report on Native Papers for 8th July, paragraph 29). This news created a sensation in the town. Was it true that the Bill, to procure the withdrawal of which the residents of Calcutta had spent no end of money and labour, was really going to be withdrawn?

The news was too good to be believed. Many respectable people called upon us and enquired where we had got the news. The next day, the English papers said that there was no foundation for the news published by us. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* telegraphed to its Simla correspondent, and learnt as much in reply. *The Daily News* said that the statement of the *Sanjivani* was without foundation, but it wrote the next day, on the authority of some high official in Simla,—

"We said that the statement relating to the Municipal Bill was without foundation; but, in fact, it was not so. What we ought to have said, was that the statement was unauthorised."

Later on, the Simla correspondent of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* wrote after more inquiry that important alterations would be made in the Municipal Bill. The *Indian Mirror* wrote:—"It was the *Sanjivani* which first published the news

that the Municipal Bill would be withdrawn. But where did the *Sanjivani* get the news? Its statement, however, has been contradicted." But the writer did not say who contradicted the statement.

Men are generally slow to believe good news. Though the other newspapers at first pooh-poohed our statement as being without foundation, every one of them had to admit, in the end, that it was not so. The Viceroy's Private Secretary has only said that our statement was unauthorised, but he does not say that it was false.

From what has been heard from Simla, we are positive that the Government of India has directed radical changes to be effected in some important portions of the Bill. After alteration, expurgation and amendment, the Bill is again to be submitted to the Government of India for its approval. And, if such approval is given, the Bill in its new form will be re-introduced in the Bengal Council.

To speak plainly, the Municipal Bill will not be passed in its present shape. If the Government of Bengal wishes to carry through its measure, it must introduce a practically new Bill.

HITAVADI, July 7th, 1899.

The Calcutta Municipal Bill.

28. The *Hitavadi* of the 7th July refers to the *Sanjivani's* article on the Calcutta Municipal Bill (Report on Native Papers for 8th July, paragraph 29) and writes as follows:—

Alas! who has thus imposed upon the credulity of a simple-minded newspaper? Show your gratitude to the Viceroy by all means, but do not grieve us by circulating the baseless rumour that His Excellency has already ordered the rejection of the Municipal Bill. We do not know whether Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose has read a paper or delivered a speech, dealing exclusively with the Calcutta Municipal Bill. He may have made an occasional reference to the Bill in his Congress speech, but he has not thoroughly or comprehensively discussed the Bill—he has not found time to discuss it in the same way in which Babus Narendra Nath Sen and Surendranath Banerjee have discussed it in their speeches in the Council, or in their note of dissent attached to the Select Committee's Report – not even as fully as Babu Nalin Bihari Sarkar and Mr. N. N. Ghosh have dealt with the Bill in their papers and articles on the subject. And yet the writer in the *Sanjivani* does not hesitate to make prominent mention of the name of Mr. Ananda Mohan in connection with this matter! This strikes us as strange, and it is no wonder that the writer's information about the rejection of the Municipal Bill should strike us as much more strange. It would, no doubt, have been a matter for congratulation if the rumour about the rejection of the Bill had been true. But that time, that happy time for congratulation, has not yet come.

We are fortunate enough to have got a large-hearted and sympathetic ruler like Lord Curzon. We do not think that he is not paying his attention to the Municipal Bill, or that he is disregarding the piteous cry of thousands of people. There is no doubt that he will carefully consider the Bill and act according to his own conviction. It will not, however, be speaking the truth to say prematurely that he has already ordered its rejection.

It appears from information, which has reached us from behind the scenes, that Lord Curzon has written a letter to the Secretary of State on the subject of the Calcutta Municipal Bill. This letter reflects Lord Curzon's personal opinion on the subject. According to this opinion, if it is at all necessary to amend the Municipal law, it should not be so amended as to render the representatives of the rate-payers quite powerless. The time has not yet come for experimenting how municipal work will be done, if the European rate-payers are solely or mainly entrusted with Municipal Administration. The Bill for amending the Municipal law is, therefore, neither opportune nor workable. The Bengal Government has wasted much time upon the discussion of the Bill. There was no need of doing so.

In the opinion of the Viceroy, if the Bill is to be at all amended, it should be made to undergo alterations; and it should then be discussed and passed as soon as possible. The number of Commissioners may be reduced, but the existing proportion of elected to nominated Commissioners in the General Committee should not be interfered with; the number of elected Commissioners in the Committee should always be higher than the number of nominated

Commissioners; if the law is not to be amended on these lines, there is no need of amending it at all.

This, it is said, is the tenour of the Viceroy's letter to the Secretary of State. We do not know how far our information is correct; the Secretary of State has not yet expressed his opinion on the advisibility or inadvisibility of the Viceroy's proposal. It has not yet been decided on what lines the Bill will be amended, and whether a new Bill will be rejected or not. We will, no doubt, consider ourselves fortunate if it be true that Lord Curzon contemplates amending the law on the lines mentioned above. When the Bill goes to the Government of India, after being discussed in the Bengal Council, then and then only will come the time for trying our lot. No one can boldly predict the future of the Bill before that time. But we have one hope, Lord Curzon is not the man to be led by evil counsellors. He will act according to his own conviction, and, we believe, he will not arrive at a decision without minutely examining the Bill.

The only conclusion that we can form at present is, that the Viceroy is not desirous of making the labour of the Bengal Council null and void. But if it is his desire to alter the Bill on the lines suggested above, there will be some cause for congratulation. The manner in which the Viceroy has praised the note of dissent attached to the Select Committee's Report is also hopeful. In fact, this note of dissent has been commended in all quarters. Even Sir Charles Elliott speaks of it thus:—"I have read your note of dissent. I must admit that my sympathy is with you." Why should we not hope if the rumour, about Lord Curzon's letter to Lord George Hamilton, be true? We expect a good deal from Lord Curzon, and in this matter of the Municipal Bill, we expect kindness and sympathy from him. There is no doubt that he will carefully consider the matter, and make a satisfactory settlement of the question.

Let us say, in conclusion, that if the existing system of Municipal Administration is to be replaced by a new one, let us have sufficient time to patiently consider the Bill. The Bill has not yet been submitted to the Governor-General in Council for final disposal. Let it be thoroughly discussed in the Bengal Council before it is sent up to the Viceroy. This was done in 1876, as well as in 1888. Let the Bill be again discussed by the Select Committee. This is our prayer to Sir John Woodburn.

29. The same paper writes as follows:— HITAVADI, July 7th, 1899.

The Whipping Bill.

It has been proposed to submit a new Whipping Bill to the Supreme Legislative Council. In England, the Magistrate has the power to inflict whipping in lieu of imprisonment in many cases. It is now proposed to invest Indian Magistrates with a similar power. We do not approve of this proposal. Indian Magistrates are not found to administer justice with calmness and impartiality like English Magistrates. It is also found in many cases that the executive and judicial functions being united in one and the same person, the Magistrate who is the accuser unlawfully sentences the accused to whipping simply out of *zid* or anger. The power of sentencing the accused to whipping is often abused in this country. Take, for instance, the case of Nidhiram Uriya, or take the more recent cases of whipping inflicted by Mr. Jarbo, of Rampur Hât, and Mr. Foster, of Barh. The less whipping is inflicted, the better. If whipping is not abolished, the accused should be given the power to appeal against sentences of whipping, and whipping should not be inflicted in any case before the appeal is decided.

VI.—Miscellaneous.

30. The *Charu Mihir* of the 4th July writes:— CHARU MIHIR, July 4th, 1899.

Public sympathy with the *Charu Mihir*.

Mr. Roe, District Magistrate of Mymensingh, has given up his intention of prosecuting the *Charu Mihir*. In connection with this case, we have been charmed with the deep sympathy shown to the *Charu Mihir* by the educated community of Mymensingh. The friends and subscribers of the paper have been writing to us from various places, expressing their sincere sympathy with us. Many of them were filled with anxiety when they heard of the danger which threatened this paper. We never thought that the *Charu Mihir* had been

successful in securing such widespread affection in Mymensingh. The affectionate treatment which we have received at the hands of our contemporaries, has considerably strengthened our hands, and we owe them a debt which we shall never be able to repay.

BASUMATI, July 6th, 1899.

31. The *Basumati* of the 6th July has the following :—

Blot on British rule—an Englishman's letter.

A European friend writes to us as follows :—

"You seem to be a little fond of writing about the oppression by European officers. Let a European Subdivisional Officer accidentally do an unlawful act, and you at once write about him in your papers in a style, dressed up with all the ornaments and figures of speech at your command. Your readers, no doubt, like to read such writings, or you would not supply such food for their mind. Know that every executive officer is a symbol of the Sovereign power. Frequent abuse of executive officers, especially of European executive officers, in newspapers, may shake the people's confidence in, and reverence for, the Government. Why *may?* Such abuse is, in my opinion, actually shaking this confidence and this reverence. You are English-educated, you, who are honoured for your English education ought not to have any hand in bringing about such a state of things. I do not say that European officers do not commit oppression. But such oppression is often due to youthful rashness, evil counsel, ignorance of law, or an exuberance of kindness and sympathy. You, who are not likely to be acquainted with the motive of the erring official, write in splenetic style whatever comes uppermost to your mind. Driving your quill under the waving punkah, you are not expected to know that an executive officer in the mufassal has his dealings mostly with the dregs of society—with liars and intriguers and pettifoggers. He has, moreover, a thousand and one worries and anxieties. It is impossible for one man to carefully and calmly perform the multifarious duties which the Government has imposed upon a District Magistrate or a Subdivisional Officer. He has, therefore, to depend, in many cases, upon his subordinates, to place his confidence in the village *mandals*, and to be guided by pleaders and mukhtars in the administration of justice. The ministerial officers are corrupt to the core, and there is nothing which they cannot do, if sufficiently bribed. The Magistrate is, therefore, often misled. There is, again, *daladali* in every village, and the number of false and malicious prosecutions is on the increase. You know how the words of the *mandals* are, under such circumstances, to be rated. But you do not know how craftily does the pleader or the mukhtar of the mufassal bar try to hoodwink the Court by wilfully misinterpreting a High Court ruling. Now, a young man of 25 or 26, charged with the rule of a district or sub-division, has to deal with such people for 12 hours in the day. It is a wonder that such an officer, living a solitary and isolated life in a bungalow, and having his dealings with such people, does not commit more oppression, does not turn out a veritable *avatar* (incarnation) of highhandedness. Pardon me if I am compelled to say that it is your own countrymen who are at the root of all oppression and highhandedness, committed by European oppressors. The European civilians, who have up to this time been reprimanded by the Government for oppression and highhandedness, owed their discomfiture to evil counsellors, who are your own countrymen. It is the *badmashi* of your countrymen which, so to say, goaded them to oppression. Is it not advisable to write about erring officials with a little more forbearance? I write these few words to you, because I am one of your well-wishers."

The letter of our wise and experienced friend extremely gratifies us, and we have no doubt that he is our well-wisher. It is a great regret, a cause of complaint to us that if we write anything amiss, anything untrue, anything seditious, we are not contradicted by anyone on behalf of the Government. If any such contradiction is made, we will gladly publish it, and readily correct our mistake. It is the oppressed and the aggrieved party from whom our information is derived, and such information is not always likely to be impartial. In our opinion, the Government or a Government officer does not think it worth his while to give us any information. And when we grow angry and begin to vent our spleen, then an attempt is made to bind us hard and fast with the *nagpash* of a sedition law. This is not a just policy.

It is not only our impression, but the impression of many besides ourselves, that the prevalence of lying and cheating and malicious prosecution is due to the intricacies of the English-made law in this country. The more you try to bind the people hard and fast with laws the more you give them an opportunity to practise deception. In days gone by, the village panchayats use to try offenders, and it was a practice with them to administer a rough and ready law and pass a rough and ready sentence upon the accused. The zamindars and the malguzars were all-powerful in the village, and they had the advantage of administering justice on the spot. Not that no oppression was committed under this system, but real offenders were sure to come to grief, and wrong-doers had no alterative but to suffer a check. The decision, in all cases, moreover, was final. No appeal was allowed. But now the Evidence Act is in force, and even a notorious offender cannot be convicted, unless his guilt is proved according to the rules of that Act. Poverty is increasing in the country and you cannot blame those impoverished and hungry people, who bear false witness in a law Court, simply to satisfy their hunger. Moreover, judged by the standard of our social law, the way in which justice is administered in British law Courts, is quite unintelligible to us; it is sure to shake one's faith in the efficacy of the English-made law. Syam can deprive Ram of property to which he is lawfully entitled, simply with the help of false evidence. One can send an enemy to a long term of imprisonment if he can induce a woman to bring a false charge of a serious nature against him. It is impossible to resist such temptation. And where is the country where there is no malice, no hatred, no rivalry, no spite? In this Hindu country, the number of liars and perjurers is daily increasing. To tell the truth, it is the English Government which, in churning the sea of Hindu society, has caused this poison to come out, this besetting evil, and it is the English Government and the English Government alone which has the power to purge our society of this evil. Otherwise, our law Courts will soon become the haunts of native Satans.

One word more. We are completely at the mercy of the English. Let an Englishman browbeat us, however slightly, let him raise a finger threateningly and we are compelled to fly from the country. In our right-doing and in our wrong-doing, in our gain and in our loss, in sleep and for our food, in every point and for everything we depend on English mercy and English protection. If an Englishman commits oppression by mistake, if he treats anyone with a high hand, the oppressed is certainly undone and ruined. This is why we write so plainly and openly when we have to write about the high-handedness of a European official. Who, again, is there to listen to our complaint and redress our grievance but the Englishman? And when we cry, we cry loudly, so that we may be heard. If a mother beats her child, the child cries and complains to his mother, and may sometimes abuse her in anger. So, also, when we are oppressed or ill-treated by an Enlishman, we go to the English for the redress of our grievance—we cry and lament, and perhaps sometimes abuse. This is doing no offence. This is human nature. You may call it sedition, you may call it defamation, you may call it by any term you may find in your dictionary. But what we write, what we do is not unnatural, is not seditious, is not disrespectful. It is a regret that you do not, you cannot, understand us. You do not go to the proper source for your information about the country and its people, and this is why there are so many defects in your administration. We admit that you belong to the ruling race, that you are a Magistrate, or a Judge; and as such you cannot allow yourself to be on intimate terms with the people without running the risk of being biased in your administration of justice. This is true. But this is no reason why you should always try to keep aloof from the people whom you have to govern. It is true that you are giving us an English education, so that *we* may know and understand you, but that education has not only failed to give us an insight into your nature, but has also failed to give us an insight into our own nature. The reading of a dozen or so of English books does not give one an insight into the English nature, does not enable one to appreciate the nobility of the English character. And we commit mistakes, and these mistakes you do not care to rectify. In this Hindu country you do not give us a Hindu education. Why, then, blame us? Why oppress

us? Why display the Sovereign power, which you keep hidden from the public gaze? Why bewilder us with the subtleties and intricacies of your law? We are Hindus—Hindus of Asia. No amount of English polish, no slavish imitation of the English on our part can efface our Hindu nature. We pray you to understand *this*.

During the Hindu and Musalman rule, the Rajas and the Badshas used to hold open Courts, and the public were allowed to pour out their heart in the presence of their Sovereign. The Sovereign personally redressed their grievances, and right or wrong, they depended upon his decision. But under British rule, make an appeal to higher authority, praying for the redress of a wrong done by a Government officer, and the higher authority often finds no reason to interfere. Failing to get any redress at the hands of Government, people naturally rush to print.

URIYA PAPERS.

URIYA AND NAVASAMVAD, April 12th, 1899.

Plague medicines in Orissa.

32. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* of the 12th April requests the Municipalities and District Boards of Orissa to keep stocks of plague medicines and distribute the same to all mufassal dispensaries, so that the medicines may be within the easy reach of the general public.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,
Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 15th July 1899.

T. H. G.—Reg. No. 3196C—77.—19.7.99.